



**Office of the Attorney General
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NEWS RELEASE

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**Tennessee Joins Other Attorneys General in Announcing \$14.9 Million in Grants Available
as Part of Drug Company Agreement**

Attorney General Paul Summers today announced that up to \$14.9 million in grants are now available as part of the 2004 Consumer Protection agreement with the world's largest pharmaceutical company resolving allegations of deceptive "off-label" marketing of the blockbuster drug Neurontin.

Warner-Lambert (a division of Pfizer Inc.) agreed in the May 2004 consumer protection agreement it would fund the grants as part of a \$430 million global federal and state agreement. Warner-Lambert, now a division of Pfizer, is alleged to have engaged in improper off-label marketing of Neurontin. Off-label marketing is the practice of marketing a drug for uses other than those under which the drug is approved by the Federal Drug Administration.

The consumer protection share of the global agreement was approximately \$40 million. Seventy-five percent of this money will go either into the grant program or toward a corrective advertising program to provide balanced information to consumers and prescribers about Neurontin and similar drugs. Neurontin was approved by the FDA for use in treating epileptic seizures and some psychological conditions. Although doctors may prescribe a drug for off-label uses, a company may not promote the drug for off-label uses.

These grants represent the first phase of a multi-phase funding strategy developed by a committee of attorneys general. Phase One of the strategy focuses on drug marketing and drug information through educational campaigns targeting prescribers and consumers. This phase will include several rounds with preference given to programs that are national in scope.

The goals of this first phase are: 1) to improve prescribing practices by educating physicians, pharmacists and other health professionals about the drug-approval process, drug marketing, and accessing sources of fair and balanced information about drugs; and 2) to enable patients and their families to become better informed about prescription drugs by educating them about the drug approval process, drug marketing techniques, and how to access fair and balanced information about drugs.

Phase Two of the strategy will focus on conditions, specifically seizure disorders and psychological conditions, for which Neurontin has been prescribed. The details of the second

phase will be developed in greater detail as the program progresses.

Proposals can be submitted by individual states or a group of states or other governmental entities; academic institutions; or not-for-profit organizations that have current non-profit status and have experience in health-related or consumer protection issues. Non-profit organizations must also submit written support for their request from the Attorney General of a state in which the organization operates.

Requests for applications may be found at www.publichealthtrust.org. www.naag.gov. The deadline for submission for these Phase One grant proposals is Oct. 7, 2005. The states that comprise the committee to award grants include: California, Florida, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Texas and Vermont.